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(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

the big ditches they used at Hot Springs." "We've had corn as long as I can remember." "The Eastern Chiricahua planted corn even in the old times." "All the groups of Eastern Chiricahua planted." Maize was undoubtedly the first vegetable raised. "When I was young," recalled a very old man, "we never had any cultivated vegetables except corn. Later others came from Old Mexico."

The influence of the Spanish-speaking peoples to the south in the impetus toward agricultural pursuits is admitted:

> The Eastern Chiricahua raised corn, pumpkins, potatoes, onions, chili, and watermelons. We had a good deal of contact with Spanish towns. We learned to speak Spanish, and the Spanish people showed us how to raise these things. We got the seeds from the Mexicans too. We got big hoes from them or traded them from the whites.

The Eastern band made good use of the intervals of peace:

> If a Chiricahua had a Mexican friend, he would get corn as a gift, and the Indian might give a horse or something else to the Mexican. We planted at Hot Springs as well as in Mexico. We received corn up here, as well as in Mexico, from the Mexicans living around. The Indians used to be good friends with the Mexicans often. When I was small I used to play with Mexican children. They gave me the name the white people call me by now.

The techniques of cultivation in use among the Eastern Chiricahua are described by an informant:

> We planted corn, cantaloupes, and watermelons. No squash or pumpkins were planted at first. Some Chiricahua never had pumpkins or squash until 1885 or 1886, except what they could get from other peoples.
>
> We used irrigation. We dug trenches from a stream to the farm and stopped these irrigation ditches with dirt when we wanted to block them. When the corn was big enough to hoe, we went out in the woods and made a hoe of bent root. Later we had hoes from the Mexicans. To make the holes for the seeds, we used just a pointed stick. The men worked in the fields; the women worked in the fields too, but mostly men did it.

Although this informant feels that agriculture is a legitimate activity for men, another disagrees, saying: "Planting was considered a woman's job. That is the way I feel. At Fort Sill men had to do it." "Men, women, and boys assisted," according to a third spokesman. Evidently, the division of labor in agricultural work was not clear cut.

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Another account from an Eastern band member adds to the picture:

We lived by hunting, fishing, and gathering plants. But we planted corn in May, too, with Mexican hoes that were traded up. The people kept camp near their farms then, tending the corn, watering it, and weeding it. Men and women both did the planting and other work. If the man was busy or off hunting, the woman would do it herself. Corn is a favorite food, because it can be used in a good many ways.

The Chiricahua picked up the trait [of planting] long ago in Mexico. Only some of the families planted corn, but they could share their crop with their neighbors. Only about six or seven families out of the hundred in a big encampment[10] might plant corn, and each family would do it on separate land. Others would help in the work on one of these plots, and then the owner would share the crop with them. The seeds came from the Mexicans, and many didn't plant partly because they didn't have seeds.

We also got beans, chili, squash, and watermelons from the Mexicans, and the Chiricahua learned to plant these. The Chiricahua never specialized on plants—each person who grew any, grew them all in his space. Some of the planted areas were as large as thirty acres, but there were no lines between; everything was free.

If some didn't want to plant, they could hunt. Then they would give their neighbors meat, and the farmer who had a great deal allowed anyone to take what he wanted. There wasn't any buying of things.

A more detailed description of the manner in which corn was planted by the Eastern Chiricahua is the following:

The corn is soaked all night. Then two or three kernels are dropped in a hole. They say the soaking makes it grow faster. Some plant the corn kernels deep. This is when they are not soaked. When you soak them, you don't bury them so deep. Beans and pumpkin and watermelon seeds are soaked first too.

Agriculture never became so important that its symbols were richly represented in religion or mythology. Occasionally, it is advised that the corncob be put back in the husk to insure an abundant future crop, undoubtedly an extension of the custom of replacing the unused part of a medicinal plant. There is an association of the katydid with crop-raising: "The katydid is an insect the Chiricahua will not kill. We say it helps the crops grow. We pray to it to help the crops grow." In discussing the

[10] It is doubtful that encampments of one hundred families ever existed in pre-reservation days. The informant's estimates of population and of the size of farms seem excessive in this statement.